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Housekeepers' Chat

Thursday, January 9, 1930

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "How to Take Care of Upholstered Furnishings." Approved by Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletin available: "Housecleaning Made Easier."

The other day Uncle Ebenezer lost his glasses. We looked high and we looked low, but nowhere could we find a pair of glasses belonging to a dignified and portly gentleman of studious mien.

"Looks as if I'd have a buy a new pair," sighed Uncle Ebenezer. "Aunt Sammy, have You seen my spectacles?"

"No," I said, "Why not offer Billy a quarter if he can find them. He probably could, if the inducement were strong enough."

Billy looked up from the book he was reading. "Sure I can," said Billy. "Get up, Uncle Ebenezer."

Uncle Ebenezer arose from the comfortable chair. Billy lifted the cushion, and there were the lost spectacles, a spool of thread, and some nut shells.

"He always loses 'em there," said Billy, as he took the quarter. "Do I get a nickel, for finding your thread, Aunt Sammy?"

"Indeed you do not. Run upstairs and get me the whisk broom -- this chair is a disgrace to any respectable housekeeper."

After I had dusted the chair, I was so imbued with the spirit of housecleaning that I decided to devote one day next week to cleaning my upholstered furniture.

Upholstered furniture needs more care than it gets, in most homes. Any kind of cloth covering needs frequent, careful brushing, or cleaning with some kind of a suction machine. A fine damask naturally, should be cleaned with greater gentleness than a heavy, stoutly-woven mohair or denim. But all of these should be cleaned every two weeks or so.

For upholstery, either a vacuum cleaner or a brush is a most effective tool. A soft brush is best for velvet and velour, a stiffer one for tapestry and other strong, firm materials, and a pointed one for tufted upholstery.

If you haven't a vacuum cleaner or a suction machine, upholstered furniture may be taken out of doors occasionally and beaten with a flat carpet beater, or it may be cleaned indoors this way: First, cover the chair, or the davenport with a cloth that has been dipped in water and wrung as dry as possible, then beat it with a flat carpet beater. The dust will be taken up by the damp cloth.

Furniture in our house gets rather hard use. Have you had to teach your family that the arms of a davenport were not made to be used as seats? And do you have to remind them that even the politest cat will claw the covering of upholstered chairs?

When the webbing underneath a davenport or chair gets loose, and starts to sag, I call in a repair man at once. Prompt repairing keeps furniture in good condition.

Furniture on which slip covers are used needs especial care. It's a good plan to remove the slip covers once or twice a month, and clean the furniture. Watch out for moths. Once they get a start beneath a slip cover, they can do great damage. Remove the cover and clean the furniture regularly, and the moths aren't likely to get a foothold.

Would you like to have a recipe -- or a formula -- for a good furniture polish? Get your pencils, and I'll have the furniture polish ready in a minute. Woodwork should be rubbed occasionally with furniture polish, or wax, or oil, according to the original finish, and only soft dusters, free from gritty substances, should be used. Silk and chamois are excellent, because they leave no lint.

The varnish on some furniture is so hard and smooth that finger marks, and such soiled places may be removed with a cloth, wrung out of lukewarm suds, made with neutral soap. The finish may be restored to the wood by rubbing with a cloth on which a few drops of furniture polish have been sprinkled. In many cases this is a good method to use on the tops of dining tables, but in general it is unwise to put water on varnished, oiled, or waxed surfaces.

I found this formula for furniture polish in the housecleaning bulletin, "Housecleaning Made Easier." It is a convenient polish for rubbing up various kinds of woodwork. Here are the directions: Mix 1 part of raw linseed oil with two parts of turpentine, and add a little beeswax, if desired. One part of raw linseed oil, two parts of turpentine, and a little beeswax. What could be simpler than that?

There is also a formula for floor wax in the housecleaning bulletin, and lots of good advice about cleaning rugs, bath rooms, kitchen utensils, etc.

Let's take a look into the question box, before I give you the recipe left over from yesterday.

"Do you have the recipe for baking small spice or fruit cakes in paper cups?" is the question.

Any ordinary cake mixture can be baked in this way. Simply put the paper cups on a baking sheet, pour in the batter, and bake them just as you would any other small-sized cakes. You will find cake recipes in the radio cookbook and in the baking bulletin I am sending you.

Next question: "Do you have any information about taking care of infants?"

Yes indeed, The new book on "Infant Care," just published by the Children's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor, is a most comprehensive book on the subject. It tells how to take care of well babies and sick babies, how to dress them, feed them, bathe them, give them sunbaths -- in fact, I can't think of any

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questions about babies which are not answered in this 120-page book. I shall be glad to send it to you, in exchange for your name and address.

Now, before I forget it, let's have the recipe for Creamed Salsify, or Oyster Plant, left over from yesterday. Do you remember the menu? Broiled Beef on Toast; Creamed Salsify; String Beans, or some other green vegetable; and Baked Bananas.

I gave you the recipe for Broiled Beef on Toast. The recipe for Baked Bananas, with Lemon Sauce, it is in the Radio Cookbook, so there's nothing left to give you but the recipe for Creamed Salsify. Here it is, with seven ingredients:

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| 2 bunches salsify, or oyster plant | 1 cup milk |
| 2 tablespoons melted butter | 1/2 teaspoon salt |
| or other fat | Pepper, and |
| 2 tablespoons flour | 1 tablespoon chopped parsley |

Seven ingredients: (Please repeat)

Wash the salsify. Scrape it, cut into small pieces, and drop into cold water to prevent it from turning dark. Boil in an uncovered pan, in a small quantity of unsalted water, for 30 minutes, or until tender, and drain. Prepare a sauce of the fat, flour, milk, salt, and pepper. Pour this over the cooked salsify, re-heat, and serve with the chopped parsley sprinkled over the top.

That's all, for the Creamed Salsify, which goes with the Broiled Beef on Toast; String Beans; and Baked Bananas.

Tomorrow: "Fish Chowder for Friday."

